

## **OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE POLICY AND PROGRAMS TUITION ASSISTANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

**THE LANGUAGE USED IN THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CREATE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT BETWEEN THE EMPLOYEE AND THE AGENCY. THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CREATE ANY CONTRACTUAL RIGHTS OR ENTITLEMENTS. THE AGENCY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE THE CONTENTS OF THIS DOCUMENT, IN WHOLE OR IN PART. NO PROMISES OR ASSURANCES, WHETHER WRITTEN OR ORAL, WHICH ARE CONTRARY TO OR INCONSISTENT WITH THE TERMS OF THIS PARAGRAPH CREATE ANY CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT.**

### **I. Policy**

The Governor's Office Tuition Assistance Program provides employees the opportunity to further their education to develop a more educated workforce that can better meeting the needs of the Agency in accomplishing its mission. The Tuition Assistance Program will be administered by the Human Resources Office. The program shall be governed by guidelines and procedures as listed below:

### **II. Guidelines**

- A.  
Only employees who occupy permanent, temporary grant, time limited positions who work 30 or more hours per week and who have at least six months of satisfactory service with the Governor's Office are eligible for tuition assistance. Also, new employees who complete courses during their first six months with the Governor's Office are eligible upon completion of at least six months of satisfactory service with the Governor's Office.
- B.  
Applications will be approved for one fiscal year at a time and will be considered in order of receipt.
- C.  
The Tuition Assistance Program will be administered by the Human Resources Office. The Governor's Office has the right to limit or to change the parameters of the program based on financial and staffing considerations.
- D.  
Tuition assistance may be provided for no more than six credit hours per academic term per employee or 12 credit hours per fiscal year.
- E.

Employees who participate in the program are required to work the normal number of hours in their work schedule. Management may accommodate variable work schedules for employees and/or allow them to use annual leave to accommodate class schedules. However, such schedules shall not interfere with the services of the Agency. Employees must obtain approval in advance for time off and/or variable work schedules from their supervisors in accordance with current agency policies.

F.

Tuition assistance will be provided only to employees who are accepted for admission and who attend accredited South Carolina institutions of higher learning. Employees must bear any associated costs of the application and acceptance process. Courses must be taken for academic credit but do not have to be taken toward the completion of a degree. Courses subsidized through this program must have a direct relationship to your current job requirements or to career development opportunities within South Carolina State Government. The Agency has sole discretion to determine whether a course is job related or enhances performance/promotion potential.

G.

Employees must pass the course(s) taken with at least a "C" to have tuition costs reimbursed. This does not apply to courses required by the Agency.

H.

Tuition assistance is not available to employees receiving allowances from any other official sources, including veterans' benefits, scholarships, grant-in-aid, etc.

I.

Participation in the Tuition Assistance Program will not be subject to appeal or review outside the Agency. Selection will be non-discriminatory.

J.

A Tuition Assistance form must be completed for each academic term. All requests for tuition assistance must specify the amount of reimbursement requested and be recommended and approved by the Office/Division Director. Courses with different end dates in different fiscal years require separate forms.

K.

Tuition and lab fees will be reimbursed at the following rates based on employees' salaries up to a maximum of \$1,350 per year.

<b><u>Salary</u></b>	<b><u>Amount Reimbursed</u></b>
<b>Up to \$25,000</b>	<b>\$450 or cost of course(s) per term, whichever is less</b>
<b>\$25,001-\$39,999</b>	<b>\$375 or cost of course(s) per term, whichever is less</b>
<b>\$40,000-\$59,999</b>	<b>\$300 or cost of course(s) per term, whichever is less</b>

Book costs and any other fees will not be paid unless the agency requires the employee to take the course. For an employee to be reimbursed, an official copy of grade(s) and receipt of payment to the respective institution must be submitted to the Human Resources Office no later than 30 calendar days after course completion.

L.

Resources received from the program may be subject to Federal and State taxes. Each employee who receives tuition assistance is responsible for reporting any such tax consequences.

Employees who terminate employment for any reason before receiving previously approved tuition reimbursement under the program will not be allowed to claim reimbursement.

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